

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EUR/WE:MDURKEE

APPROVED BY EUR:AAHARTMAN

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 251738 TOSEC 160259

NODIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, SP

SUBJECT: REQUEST FROM JUAN CARLOS

REF: MADRID 7370

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM HARTMAN

1. YOU HAVE SEEN THE MESSAGE FROM STABLER RECOMMENDING THAT WE RESPOND FAVORABLY TO JUAN CARLOS' REQUEST FOR OUR HELP BY APPROACHING ARIAS.

2. THE SITUATION IN SPAIN IS COMPLEX AND WE HAVE NO CLEAR IDEA WHAT THE EFFECT OF SUCH AN APPROACH WOULD BE. THE POINTS IN FAVOR OF DOING IT WOULD BE:

-- WE WOULD IDENTIFY OURSELVES WITH A CHANGE DESIRED BY JUAN CARLOS, MANY CIVILIAN AND MILITARY LEADERS, AND THOSE WHO WILL NOW ASSUME LEADERSHIP IN SPAIN.

-- IF SUCCESSFUL, WE WOULD AVOID FRANCO LINGERING ON
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AND SPAIN DRIFTING TOWARD A MORE DIFFICULT SUCCESSION

LATER.

THE CONS ARE:

-- EVEN THOUGH COUCHED AS FRIENDLY ADVISE NOT AIMED AT FRANCO, OUR APPROACH WOULD BE SEEN BY SOME AS INTERVENING IN THE MOST SENSITIVE INTERNAL QUESTION.

-- THE APPROACH MIGHT NOT HAVE ANY EFFECT ON THE ACTUAL RESULT AND WE WOULD RISK OURSELVES FOR NOTHING.

3. AFTER WEIGHING THE POSSIBLE GAINS AGAINST WHAT I SEE AS LIMITED RISKS, I BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD RESPOND POSITIVELY TO JUAN CARLOS' REQUEST NOW, WHILE WE CAN PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN BRINGING ABOUT THE TRANSITION WE IN FACT FAVOR.

4. I RECOMMEND THAT YOU AUTHORIZE STABLER TO SEE ARIAS AND MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- OUR TWO COUNTRIES ARE AT THE THRESHOLD OF AN ENRICHED COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP.

-- WE BELIEVE STRONGLY THAT SPAIN HAS AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN THE WORLD AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING EVEN MORE CLOSELY WITH IT IN THE FUTURE.

-- THE PRESENT SITUATION REQUIRES THAT SPAIN BE LED VIGOROUSLY AND DECISIVELY AND NOT BE ALLOWED TO DRIFT.

-- THE SUCCESSION OF JUAN CARLOS NOW WOULD OPEN IMPORTANT NEW POSSIBILITIES NOT ONLY WITH THE US BUT WITH THE WESTERN WORLD AS A WHOLE. INGERSOLL

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